
Winter 1-15-1967

Letters

Barry Tunick

Bob Foster

Nan C. Scott

P. L. Travers

Howard Nemerov

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Online Summer Seminar 2023

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Letters

HONEY BRAN KNOBS

2 cups flour	2/3 cup milk
2/3 cups sugar	1/2 cup chopped nuts
1/2 cup brown sugar	2 eggs
1/2 cup honey	3/4 tsp. soda
1/2 cup raisins	1/2 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups bran	1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. vanilla	1 tsp. cinnamon

Sieve together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Melt the butter, add the sugar, honey, and eggs, mixing together in a bowl. Dissolve the soda in the milk, then add the sifted dry ingredients alternately with the milk to the mixture in the bowl. Stir in the raisins, nuts, bran, and vanilla. Mix well, then drop by teaspoonfuls onto a well-greased cookie sheet. Bake ten minutes in a fairly hot oven.

SEED-CAKES (reprinted by permission of the author from Diplomat magazine, October 1966)

2 eggs	scant 1/2 cup milk
1/2 tsp. almond flavoring	at least 1 tsp. caraway seeds
3/4 cup sugar	a little finely grated lemon rind
1 cup flour	some slivered almonds
1 tsp. baking powder	(optional) some candied fruit peel
pinch of salt	powdered sugar
1 tbs. butter	

Beat the eggs with the almond flavoring. Add sugar a little at a time. Sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt, and stir in. Melt the butter with the warm milk, add, and stir gently. Put in the caraway seeds, lemon rind, almonds, and, if you wish, fruit peel. Bake in a moderate oven for 25 minutes, using a buttered square pan. Since the batter is fairly thin, the seeds and nuts may sink to the bottom of the pan. Turn out the cake upside-down, sprinkle with powdered sugar when it has cooled, and cut it into squares.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Dainis Bisenieks seems to believe (II,4) that because I call myself a liberal I must use "conservative" pejoratively, and that his saying that he'll comment on my article ("Social Philosophy in TLotR," II,2) point by point will somehow make his commentary complete and accurate. Neither belief is justified.

First, his definition of "conservative" coincides largely with the one I used. Second, his first paragraph reveals a total unfamiliarity with my next-to-last one.

I invite Mr Bisenieks and all fair-minded TJ readers to reread both my article and his criticism, and to decide which is more "authentically sophomoric." My article was written almost a year ago; I wouldn't defend every line of it today. If Mr B. will reread his critique, perhaps he too might have second thoughts--about the use of "selah" when "amen" is apparently intended, about the grave reminder that "power still corrupts..." (Poli Sci 2A?) in his remarkable fourth paragraph, and about the burden one assumes when he condemns an article he disagrees with as "so wrong on every point" (surely a tendency more notable among sophomores than among, say, juniors and seniors).

I could go on, but I am more self-conscious about appearing smug than perhaps Mr Bisenieks is. Besides, one or two of his points are well-taken, or at least stimulating, and although we probably would disagree on many matters of art, ideology, punctuation, and even life, surely we have in common a great admiration for the subject of this journal.

I shall heed his solemn injunction to "Remember that word: decorum" and decorously close by stating a precedent for the put-on review he feared mine might be: "A Bourgeois Writer's Proletarian Fables," in The Pooh Perplex, by F.C. Crews.

Yours truly,
Barry Tunick
4470 Elenda Street
Culver City, Calif.

Dear Dick--

And so here we are with another Tolkien Journal. The bacover was very impressive, even if the Rider seemed to me a bit shorter and broader than I had imagined him. But who is Prestone? The name is unfamiliar (I think) and you don't have a credit for him/her in the contents. /Dave Prestone's work appears again in this issue./

Alexis Levitin's article on Gollum seemed completely accurate, but extremely pointless. I mean, why take four pages to describe what a lot of us know already, and what the rest probably don't care too much about. It looks sort of term-paperish. /It comes from Alexis's doctoral thesis. I included it as part of a series of articles on various characters and peoples of Middle-earth. Nextish: a somewhat more humorous article on Sam Gamgee./

"The Swansong of Arwen Undómiel" is the best Ringish poem I've read in a long time. Why is it that this sort of poem, an attempt to poeticize some aspect of one's favorite work, almost invariably brings out the worst in poets?

By the way, the Ballantine map is not completely accurate. A few extremely minor errors could not be corrected, mainly trivial deviations in Frodo's route. As far as I know, however, the rest of the map is accurate. /Bob stopped over one afternoon recently and we examined the map; we found Michel Delving placed on the Far Downs instead of the White Downs, and the River Silverlode misspelled Saverlode, as well as several minor omissions, but no gross errors./

John Closson's letter in Entmoot 4 has finally converted me to an almost-Anglicized orthography for Elvish script. John's point about dialectical differences making phonetic spelling impossible for international use seems irrefutable. /But what of the relatively simple problem of standardizing phonemic writing for international use? This results in something very much like Cory's mode. I use a phonemic mode; I understand an orthographic mode. What is inexcusable to me is a mode like that presented by Kathryn Blackmun at the Mankato conference last



fall. This mode seems to combine all the worst features of both the phonemic and the orthographic approaches with the added problem of too strict and complex rules. It's a shame, because I liked Cory Seidman's mode--it looks better, because I've never yet made a decent-looking vowel-carrier.

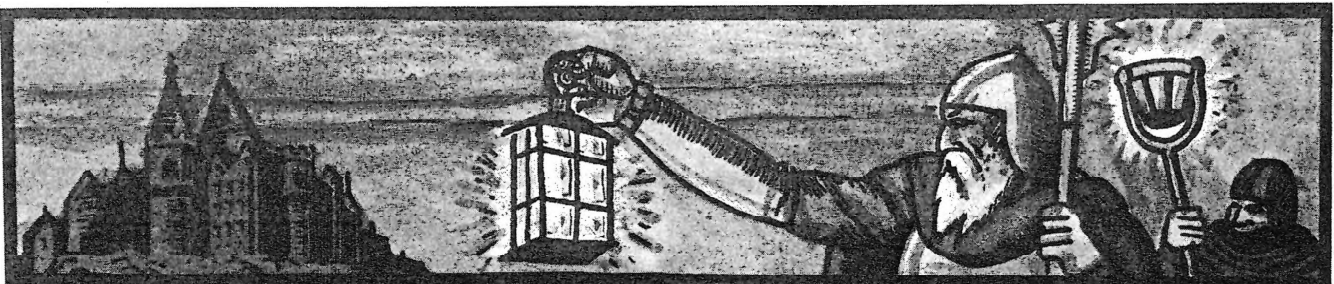
Incidentally, in the color plate of the Great Hall of Thrain in the early editions [and most recent reprint] of The Hobbit there is a pot of gold. The inscription on the pot includes the word "gold", which is spelled *gûls*, as it would be in Cory's system. (Or is it *gûlcs*? [Yes.] Not having seen the plate in many months I forget. If it is the former one could make out a definite, authoritative case for the use of *z* and *y* as "ld" and "rd".)

My main purpose in writing is to thank Dainis Bisenieks for his answer to Barry Tunick, and to try

to answer his question about the Book of Mazarbul. Incredible as it seems, I can see no reason why Gimli did not keep the Book with him, at least for a while. That the Fellowship kept their packs at least until Parth Galen is stated in II-25 (Bal.; hc II-21). The Three Hunters had some sort of baggage with them, for they ate on the trail. Once they came to Edoras, they had a chance to either store their baggage somewhere or carry it along with them as part of an organized army, perhaps with baggage-wains, etc. So, although Gimli may not have taken the Book with him on the Paths of the Dead or with the Army of the West, the Book probably wasn't lost.

Ymhetc.

Bob Foster
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New York, N.Y. 10027



Dear Professor Tolkien,

Although no mallorn will flower as a party tree on Headington Hill to honour the event, your seventy-fifth birthday finds you mighty among the Wise. May the years to come be as rich and blessed as those Bilbo spent in the Hall of Fire at Rivendell. We know that your many admirers join in our hope that you may outlive the Old Took and, indeed, even Bilbo himself.

*Professor and Mrs. William C. Scott
(Nan C. Scott)*

Yes, I am indeed an admirer of J. R. R. Tolkien's work -- particularly of the Hobbit which seems to me a perfect and complete lyric. I am not a member of the Tolkien cult, however -- Frodo lives in spite, not because of, buttons and posters! Cults, by their very nature, have a way of damming up the waters and Tolkien's river is one that must go flowing on and on. My blessings and thanks to him.

Yours sincerely,

P. L. Travers

P. L. Travers

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18 xii 66

Dear Mr Plotz,

Sorry to be late; your letter got snowed under some other things on the desk and didn't turn up till just now.

Greetings to Professor Tolkien on his birthday, and many thanks to him for his great fable.

There. I'm no good at composing encomia, and I hope this poor expression reaches you in time.

Yours truly,

P. L. Travers

--18--